

Last spring, after too many months of delay, after reluctance to take the advice of so many of us, the president finally went back to the U.N., and it passed Resolution 1546. It was the right thing to do, but it was late.

That resolution calls on U.N. members to help in Iraq by providing troops, trainers for Iraq's security forces and a special brigade to protect the U.N. mission, and more financial assistance and real debt relief.

But guess what? Three months later, not a single country has answered that call, and the president acts as if it doesn't matter.

And of the 13 billion that was previously pledged to Iraq by other countries, only \$1.2 billion has been delivered.

The president should convene a summit meeting of the world's major powers and of Iraq's neighbors, this week, in New York, where many leaders will attend the U.N. General Assembly, and he should insist that they make good on the U.N. resolution. He should offer potential troop contributors specific but critical roles in training Iraqi security personnel and in securing Iraqi borders. He should give other countries a stake in Iraq's future by encouraging them to help develop Iraq's oil resources and by letting them bid on contracts instead of locking them out of the reconstruction process.

Now, is this more difficult today? You bet it is. It's more difficult today because the president hasn't been doing it from the beginning. And I and others have repeatedly recommended this from the very beginning.

Delay has only made it harder. After insulting allies and shredding alliances, this president may not have the trust and the confidence to bring others to our side in Iraq.

But I'll tell you, we cannot hope to succeed unless we rebuild and lead strong alliances so that other nations share the burden with us. That is the only way to be successful in the end.

Second, the president must get serious about training Iraqi security forces.

Last February, Secretary Rumsfeld claimed that—claimed that more than 210,000 Iraqis were in uniform. This is the public statement to America.

Well, guess what, America? Neither number bears any relationship to the truth.

For example, just 5,000 Iraqi soldiers have been fully trained by the administration's own minimal standards. And of the 35,000 police now in uniform, not one—not one has completed a 24-week field training program.

Is it any wonder that Iraqi security forces can't stop the insurgency or provide basic law and order?

The president should urgently expand the security forces' training program inside and outside of Iraq. He should strengthen the vetting of recruits, double the classroom training time, require the follow-on field training. He should recruit thousands of qualified trainers from our allies, especially those who have no troops in Iraq. He should press our NATO allies to open training centers in their countries.

And he should stop misleading the American people with phony, inflated numbers and start behaving like we really are at war.

Third, the president must carry out a reconstruction plan that finally brings tangible benefits to the Iraqi people, all of which, may I say, should have been in the plan and immediately launched with such a ferocity that there was no doubt about America's commitment or capacity in the very first moments afterwards. But they didn't plan.

He ignored his own State Department's plan, he discarded it.

Last week, the administration admitted that its plan was a failure when it asked

Congress for permission to radically revise the spending priorities in Iraq. It took them 17 months for them to understand that security is a priority, 17 months to figure out that boosting oil production is critical, 17 months to conclude that an Iraqi with a job is less likely to shoot at our soldiers.

One year ago, this administration asked for and received \$18 billion to help the Iraqis and relieve the conditions that contribute to the insurgency. Today, less than \$1 billion of those funds have actually been spent. I said at the time that we have to rethink our policies and set standards of accountability, and now we're paying the price for not doing that.

He should use more Iraqi contractors and workers instead of big corporations like Halliburton.

In fact, he should stop paying companies under fraud investigation or corruption investigation. And he should fire the civilians in the Pentagon who are responsible for mismanaging the reconstruction effort.

Fourth, the president must take immediate, urgent, essential steps to guarantee that the promised election can be held next year. Credible elections are key to producing an Iraqi government that enjoys the support of the Iraqi people and an assembly that could write a constitution and yields a viable power-sharing agreement.

Because Iraqis have no experience in holding free and fair elections, the president agreed six months ago that the U.N. must play a central role, yet today, just four months before Iraqis are supposed to go to the polls, the U.N. Secretary General and administration officials say elections are in grave doubt, because the security situation is so bad, and because not a single country has yet offered troops to protect the U.N. elections mission.

The president needs to tell the truth. The president needs to deal with reality, and he should recruit troops from our friends and allies for a U.N. protection force.

Now, this is not going to be easy. I understand that.

Again, I repeat, every month that's gone by, every offer of help spurned, every alternative not taken for these past months has made this more difficult and those were this president's choices. But even countries that refused to put boots on the ground in Iraq ought to still be prepared to help the United Nations hold an election.

We should also intensify the training of Iraqis to manage and guard the polling places that need to be opened. Otherwise, U.S. forces will end up bearing that burden alone.

If the president would move in this direction, if he would bring in more help from other countries to provide resources and to train the Iraqis to provide their own security and to develop a reconstruction plan that brings real benefits to the Iraqi people, and take the steps necessary to hold elections next year, if all of that happened, we could begin to withdraw U.S. forces starting next summer and realistically aim to bring our troops home within the next four years.

That can be achieved.

This is what has to be done. This is what I would do if I were president today. But we can't afford to wait until January and I can't tell you what I will find in Iraq on January 20th.

President Bush owes it to the American people to tell the truth and put Iraq on the right track. Even more, he owes it to our troops and their families whose sacrifice is a testament to the best of America.

The principles that should guide American policy in Iraq now and in the future are clear. We must make Iraq the world's responsibility, because the world has a stake in the

outcome and others should have always been bearing the burden.

That's the right way to get the job done. It always was the right way to get the job done to minimize the risk to American troops and the cost to American taxpayers. And it is the right way to get our troops home.

On May 1st of last year, President Bush stood in front of a now-infamous banner that read Mission accomplished. He declared to the American people that, in the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed.

In fact, the worst part of the war was just beginning, with the greatest number of American casualties still to come.

The president misled, miscalculated and mismanaged every aspect of this undertaking and he has made the achievement of our objective—a stable Iraq, secure within its borders, with a representative government—far harder to achieve than it ever should have been.

In Iraq, this administration's record is filled with bad predictions, inaccurate cost estimates, deceptive statements and errors of judgment, presidential judgment, of historic proportions.

At every critical juncture in Iraq and in the war on terrorism, the president has made the wrong choice.

I have a plan to make America stronger.

The president often says that in a post-9/11 world we can't hesitate to act. I agree. But we should not act just for the sake of acting.

George Bush has no strategy for Iraq. I do and I have all along.

George Bush has not told the truth to the American people about why we went to war and how the war is going. I have and I will continue to do so.

I believe the invasion of Iraq has made us less secure and weaker in the war on terrorism. I have a plan to fight a smarter, more effective war on terror that actually makes America safer.

Today, because of George Bush's policy in Iraq, the world is a more dangerous place for America and Americans; just ask anyone who travels.

If you share my conviction that we cannot go on as we are, that we can make America stronger and safer than it is, then November 2nd is your chance to speak and to be heard.

It is not a question of staying the course, but of changing the course.

I am convinced that with the right leadership, we can create a fresh start, move more effectively to accomplish our goals.

Our troops have served with extraordinary courage and commitment. For their sake, for America's sake, we have to get this right. We have to do everything in our power to complete the mission and make America stronger at home and respected again in the world.

Thank you, God bless you and God bless the United States of America.

Thank you.

WIDENING OF THE INCOME GAP

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I draw to the attention of the Senate an issue which many of us have been concerned about for some period of time. Now it has reached the front page of some of the leading newspapers of this country, and it is something that is of central concern to families all over this Nation. I refer to the excellent opening yesterday of a series by the Washington Post, yesterday's called "As Income Gap Widens, Uncertainty Spreads." This is an enormously interesting column.

I ask unanimous consent that excerpts from this column be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Figuring out what the future holds for workers is key to understanding a historic shift in the U.S. workforce, a shift that has been changing the rules for a crucial part of the middle class.

This transformation is no longer just about factory workers, whose ranks have declined by 5 million in the past 25 years as manufacturing moved to countries with cheaper labor. All kinds of jobs that pay in the middle range—are vanishing, including computer-code crunchers, produce managers, call-center operators, travel agents and office clerks.

The jobs have had one thing in common: For people with a high school diploma and perhaps a bit of college, they can be a ticket to a modest home, health insurance, decent retirement and maybe some savings for the kids' tuition. Such jobs were a big reason America's middle class flourished in the second half of the 20th century.

Now what those jobs share is vulnerability. The people who fill them have become replaceable by machines, workers overseas or temporary employees at home who lack benefits. And when they are replaced, many don't know where to turn.

Robert Boyer retrained in computers after the plant closed. But tech companies told him they wanted five years' experience, not a certificate from a six-month course. So he works for \$11.50 an hour at Home Depot, using the wisdom of four decades as plant electrician to help customers pick light bulbs for their remodeled kitchens.

Boyer turns angry at any suggestion that the jobs picture is not that bad. "When these guys get on the boob tube and say there's jobs out there, you just gotta go out there and get them, it makes me want to go out there and grab them by the throat and say, 'Where? Where are the jobs at?'"

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I highlight what this story is really about. I think we will find—I certainly do in my home State of Massachusetts and my travels around the country—that this is a reality check. This story is a reality check of what is happening in cities, towns, urban areas, and rural areas across the country.

It says:

As Income Gap Widens, Uncertainty Spreads.

I quote the Washington Post:

The vanishing middle class.

Now what middle class jobs share is vulnerability . . . The people who fill them have been replaceable by machines, workers overseas or temporary employees at home who lack benefits, and when they are replaced they don't know where to turn.

The article continues:

All kinds of jobs that pay in the middle range are vanishing, including computer code crunchers, produce managers, call center operators, travel agents and office clerks.

And the list goes on, and the article goes on and on about what is happening to middle-income workers in the United States of America at this time.

I find that this article is a restatement about what many of us believe has been happening for some time and trying to make it a point to try to do

something about it. But we have been rebuffed and the ideas have been rejected in the Senate, and certainly by the administration.

When we are talking about dealing with some of the issues, which I will comment on, we find an administration that says no to an increase in the minimum wage, no to extending unemployment compensation, no in terms of overtime, all which would have a great impact on the middle class.

Now, what do we hear on the other side? First of all, we heard from the President of the United States in New York yesterday: "The economy is strong and is getting stronger." This is from a speech the President made in New York yesterday, even though New York has lost 240,000 jobs since the President took office.

Also yesterday, in New Hampshire, the President said: "The economy of ours is growing." New Hampshire's unemployment rate is 32 percent higher than when the President took office. The New Hampshire economy has lost more than 7,000 jobs. But according to the President: "The economy of ours is growing." And according to the President yesterday: "The economy is strong and is getting stronger."

And then we see, of course, what the President said at the time of the Republican Convention: "We have seen a shaken economy rise to its feet." Well, how can it be this way? How can the President of the United States be saying "the economy is strong and is getting stronger" and then we have these reports here?

Well, let's look at the facts. Let's look at what has been happening over the period of the recent years. If we look at the recovery the President talks about, as shown on this chart, the current recovery is depicted by this red line right here in terms of job growth. If you are looking at the recoveries before 1991, you see the job growth that went up, as shown here. And if you look from 1991 to 1993, this is the job growth here. It is basically the Clinton job growth.

We see the difference between the Clinton job growth and the Bush job growth. Make no mistake about it, Presidential leadership makes a difference. Look at the record. During President Clinton's administration, 22 million jobs were added. During President Kennedy's administration, we had one of the longest periods of economic growth and price stability that we had in that century up until the time of President Clinton. So Presidential leadership does matter.

We have the President saying: Everything is fine. We are growing stronger and stronger. It is not the Democrats who are saying we have a real crisis in the middle class. Here we have one of our national newspapers that is saying exactly what many of us have been saying for some period of time.

Now, what are the facts? We can see the economic record. We have lost 1.7 million private-sector jobs from Janu-

ary of 2001 to August 2004—1.7 million jobs lost, not gained but lost, here in the United States. We have gone from 111,600,000 to 109,800,000 jobs.

Let's look at what is happening across the country. Here is a chart that shows, under President Bush, unemployment is higher in 45 of the 50 States. The States that are marked in red on this chart are States with higher unemployment than when Bush took office. The States with the same unemployment as when the President took office are marked in yellow. The States marked in green have lower unemployment than when the President took office, which are Louisiana, Nevada, Hawaii, and Delaware—four States. For all of the other States, you see the loss of over 1 million jobs. We have higher unemployment not only in some regions of the country but generally throughout the country.

What is happening in terms of the new jobs? As shown on this chart, most new jobs in the Bush economy pay low wages. This is not something we are saying over on this side, the Democratic side. This is the chief economist for Morgan Stanley, who says 81 percent of the growth in jobs is in the low-wage industries: janitors, salespeople, movers, repairmen, and drivers. It is interesting, those jobs do not have the benefits. Those jobs do not have the health insurance. Those jobs do not have any kind of sick leave. Those jobs do not have any kind of protection in terms of pensions or anything else. And it is 81 percent of the growth in jobs, according to Morgan Stanley. Jobs in the high-wage industries—construction jobs, white-collar jobs—are the remaining 19 percent. So we have seen that whatever jobs have been created have largely been at the lower level.

This chart is from the Economic Policy Institute. It shows the disparity in pay between growing and shrinking industries—\$51,270 for the expanding industries, \$30,368 for the contracting industries—41 percent less. So this is saying essentially what the previous chart showed; and that is, the jobs that are being created even now are still not paying well.

Let's see what is happening to the families across the country. These are median household incomes. This is what is happening in working families over the period from 2000 to 2003. The real purchasing power has gone down some \$1,500.

So we say, all right, this is the dilemma. You are sure it is a slow economy, but what in the world should we expect? We all have to share this burden, and it is too bad that workers have to share it. What is so bad about that? Well, I will show you what is bad about that, and that is, we have seen that productivity is growing 15 times faster than wages—workers are working longer, they are working harder, and they are producing more, but they are not seeing the benefit in terms of wages. They are not seeing it. This is the largest disparity in terms of productivity versus wages in the recent

history of this country. So the workers are working longer. They are working harder. They are producing more. But do you think that would reflect itself in increased wages?

And let me show you this chart here. In the Bush economy, we find that corporations are getting a bigger and bigger share of the pie. Here is the share of corporate profits having increased by 65 percent over workers' wages. This gap here is the largest gap we have had in the postwar period: larger corporate profits, workers with increased productivity, working longer and harder and yet they are still not able to make ends meet. These charts are going back to what the Washington Post pointed out here: "As Income Gap Widens, Uncertainty Spreads." That is what is happening in the economy.

And we can see the difference between this and other recoveries. The average in the last eight recoveries is corporate profits going up 14 percent and the workers' wages going up 8.6 percent. But here in the Bush recovery you have corporate profits going up 39 percent and wages—adjusted for inflation—going down by half of 1 percent. There it is.

We ask: Is this President doing anything about it? What is he doing? Opposing an increase in the minimum wage, saying no more overtime for middle-income families, and no, you are not going to get the unemployment compensation you paid into, that you are entitled to as a matter of right.

This is an extraordinary chart, where you get, on average, CEOs making \$8.1 million versus the average worker's \$26,000. This is startling. It is the average, not the median. It is the average because so many of the CEOs make so much more. The point is, the disparity between the CEOs and the workers is 300 times.

Now, it is against that background that we have many being laid off and new jobs not paying well, that we have the administration putting a lid on any of the efforts we can provide in the Senate in terms of unemployment compensation and protecting overtime. And what has been happening out there? What has been happening in the meantime? We know the wages these workers are receiving, if they have been laid off and they get a new job, are not keeping up with the cost of things.

Here it is over the period of the last 4 years: Health insurance has increased 59 percent. If the middle income is interested in their children being able to go to schools and colleges, tuition has gone up 28 percent. Interestingly, there is no increase in Pell grants, absolutely none, although in January of 2000, when the President was running for office, he said he would ask for an increase in the Pell grants. We never received that. And in the appropriations this year they will see no increase whatsoever. Housing costs are up 27 percent. Gas is up 22 percent. Milk is up 13 percent.

In my part of the country, in Cape Cod last week, for a gallon of gas it cost \$4.05. I know it is about \$3.23 a gallon in other parts of the country.

You are asking a person to work for a minimum wage of \$5.15 and to buy a gallon of milk at \$4.05. The administration says they are opposed to any real increase. These are hard-working men and women, more than 7 million of them, many women with children. It is an issue which affects many of those hard-working men and women of dignity.

If you look at what has happened in terms of health care costs, the consumer price index has gone up 1.6, 2.4, 1.8, 5.9, and total health care costs cumulatively, 59 percent. One might ask, what in the world can we do about it? One of the things we might be able to do about it in terms of drug costs is reimportation. We could do something about that. We have a bipartisan bill. Yet we can't get it on the floor. We can't get an up-or-down vote. Those of us who would support it would go for an hour evenly divided. Let's get accountability. Let's do something about the cost.

When you ask, so you are complaining about the increase in cost, what is your idea? One of the ideas is the reimportation of drugs. But no, we can't do that. We have dealt with all the issues of safety. I yield to no one in this body in terms of the safety of health care. We are unable to permit the Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices for seniors. We could do something about that. But no, we are denied the opportunity. As a result, we have exploding costs that are going out of control in terms of health care generally and in terms of prescription drugs—all impacting middle-class families. More and more of them are losing their health care coverage, their security. They haven't got wage security. They don't have job security. They don't have education security. They don't have health security. This chart illustrates that, every single year, more than a million, from 2000 to 2003. The economy is strong? The economy is getting stronger? Everything is OK? Hello.

It isn't just those on this side of the aisle who say that this is what is happening; we have seen this in newspapers all across the country. All you have to do is visit any town in America. We know what the results are: We have 13 million children hungry or on the verge of hunger here in the United States. And the economy is getting stronger? Eight million Americans are unemployed, and nearly 3 million have lost unemployment benefits since Republicans ended the program. Seven million low wage workers wait 7 years for a minimum wage increase. That used to be a bipartisan effort, to have an increase in the minimum wage. President Bush 1 signed an increase. President Nixon signed an increase. It was bipartisan for years. But no, we can't even get a vote on it.

When we offer an amendment on one of the bills, what do our Republican friends do? They pull the bill. State Department reauthorization, pull the bill; add it onto the reform of welfare, pull the bill down; class action, pull the bill. We don't want to even vote on it. Imagine that. Imagine not even wanting to vote on it.

Six million have lost overtime protection under the new Bush rule. Let me give a quick review of who is impacted. These are the individuals who would be impacted: police, nurses. They are our homeland defenders, the first responders. They are the ones whose overtime is threatened.

In the last several days, my colleague and friend Senator KERRY has offered a real alternative to the current economic challenges we are facing, that middle-income Americans are facing every single day in terms of lost wages, lost jobs, lost health insurance, lost opportunities for education. It talks about creating good-paying jobs, strengthening the middle class, and restoring America's competitive edge and cutting the deficit.

I ask unanimous consent that an excerpt of this plan be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE KERRY-EDWARDS ECONOMIC PLAN

Under George Bush, America has lost 1.6 million private-sector jobs. The typical family has seen its income fall by more than \$1,500. Real business investment and exports are both down under George Bush, the first time we have a decline during a Presidential term in over 70 years. And all George Bush has had to offer are excuses and bad plans that put job creation and the middle class last while favoring special interests.

John Kerry and John Edwards believe that America can do better. They have an economic plan that will unleash the productive powers of America's workers and companies, creating millions of good-paying jobs and strengthening the middle class. Their economic plan is built around four basic principles:

(1) Create Good-paying Jobs in America

End tax breaks for companies creating jobs overseas and cut taxes for 99 percent of tax-paying corporations.

A New Jobs Tax Credit to encourage hiring by manufacturers, other businesses affected by outsourcing and small businesses in 2005 and 2006.

Level the playing field by enforcing out trade agreements and trade laws.

(2) Strengthen Middle-class Families by Cutting Taxes and Lowering Health and Energy Costs

Cut taxes for 98 percent of families, including new tax breaks for education, child care, and health care.

Cut health premiums by up to \$1,000 for families.

Provide \$25 billion in a State and Local Tuition and Tax Relief Fund.

(3) Restore America's Competitive Edge

Make America energy independent of Middle East oil.

Invest more in research and development, including lifting the ban on stem cell research and making broadband universal.

Double the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP).

Provide a tax cut on up to \$4,000 of college tuition and investment in training.

(4) Cut the Deficit and Restore Economic Confidence

Cut the deficit in half in four years by restraining spending growth, paying for all proposals, and eliminating corporate welfare.

Mr. KENNEDY. I thank the Chair.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The 10 minutes we are currently in are reserved for the Senator from Iowa.

The Senator from Iowa.

INSTABILITY IN IRAQ

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the chaos in Iraq gets worse with every week that goes by. Many key cities are now under the control of the insurgents. Virtually every day we see car bombings, kidnappings, assassinations, beheadings. American soldiers and Iraqi civilians are being attacked and killed at an alarming and escalating rate. But if we listen to the President, what we hear is sugar-coated happy talk.

The President says:

We're making progress. We're making progress.

He says we have a strong government in Iraq headed by Mr. Allawi. He says that because of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, democracy is spreading "like a sunrise."

Well, the President may have been a cheerleader in college, but we need more than cheerleading now.

Let's be clear: President Bush misled us into this war, and he is misleading us today about where we stand in Iraq. His misguided, mismanaged war has become a quagmire with ever-rising body counts and no end in sight.

Over the weekend, a host of Republican Senators stepped forward to urge the President to face the facts and at long last to be open and honest with the American people. On Sunday, Senator HAGEL of Nebraska said:

The fact is, we're in trouble. We're in deep trouble in Iraq.

Senator RICHARD LUGAR, distinguished chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, criticized what he called "incompetence in the administration" that has resulted in a failed Iraq reconstruction effort.

Senator JOHN MCCAIN said:

We're not winning.

Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM said that we need to be "more honest about how difficult it will be" in Iraq.

Ironically, the President's father, George Herbert Walker Bush, warned against the folly of invading and occupying Iraq. On February 28, 1999, speaking to a group of Desert Storm veterans at Fort Myer, VA, the former President told them:

Had we gone into Baghdad—we could have done it, you guys could have done it, could you have been there in 48 hours—and then what?

Then the first President Bush continued:

Whose life would be on my hands as commander-in-chief because I unilaterally went

beyond international law, went beyond the stated mission, and said we're going to show our macho? We're going into Baghdad. We're going to be an occupying power—America in an Arab land—with no allies at our side. It would have been disastrous.

That was former President Bush in 1999.

Of course, we heard the same prophetic warnings from Brent Scowcroft, James Baker, and other foreign policy experts. But this President Bush and his partner DICK CHENEY thought they knew better. So now the disaster that Bush 41 warned against has become a reality under Bush 43. It is painfully clear that President George W. Bush's wrong choices—in particular, the botched hunt for Osama bin Laden, the invasion of Iraq based on false justifications, the Abu Ghraib torture scandal, the alienation of our friends and the world—have been profoundly destructive to America's national interest. They have damaged our traditional alliances. They have undermined our moral authority, and they have all but destroyed our credibility.

Worst of all, the actions of this administration have had the perverse effect of encouraging, inciting, multiplying the terrorist threat. Exhibit A is Osama bin Laden himself. It has been more than 3 years since the President pledged to "smoke him out" of his cave. But Mr. Bush did not smoke out Osama bin Laden. Instead, the Bush administration got massively distracted by its obsession with Saddam Hussein. These days, the days responsible for the murder of some 3,000 Americans on 9/11 is "Osama bin forgotten."

In a press conference Secretary Rumsfeld had on September 10 of this year, he mixed up Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden twice. Here is a quote from our Secretary of Defense:

Saddam Hussein, if he is alive, is spending a whale of a lot of time trying to not get caught and we have not seen him on video since 2001.

Well, Saddam Hussein, as John Stewart pointed out on "The Daily Show" last night, is in prison. But he said that twice about Saddam Hussein. You see, in their minds—in Rumsfeld's mind, Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein are the same person. He cannot quite distinguish them.

The problem is Osama bin Laden has not forgotten us. He and his followers remain as dangerous today as on September 11, 2001. In July, the administration issued a dire warning that bin Laden and his chief lieutenants were directing an al-Qaida effort to launch a catastrophic attack in the U.S. before the election.

There is broader evidence that the U.S. invasion of Iraq has incited, encouraged, and stepped up the recruitment of terrorists around the world. In April, the State Department issued its annual report on terrorism, claiming a big drop in terrorist incidents—and success in the war on terrorism. But, in June, the State Department acknowledged this report was grossly incorrect.

The State Department acknowledged that, in fact, twice as many people died in terrorist attacks in 2003, and terrorism around the world has increased significantly.

The objective statistical record is clear: As a consequence of choices made by George W. Bush, America is weaker, America is less secure, Americans traveling abroad are less secure, America is more vulnerable. And the professionals—the men and women on the front lines—know this is true.

Earlier this year, the Army War College published a report that concluded, in so many words, that the administration has bungled the war on terrorism. The report called the war in Iraq "unnecessary." It said Iraq "was a war-of-choice distraction from the war of necessity against al-Qaida." As a result of this detour, says the report, the U.S. Army is "near the breaking point."

Who can disagree with these findings? With our military tied down in Iraq indefinitely, unable to respond to real threats, America is weaker, not stronger. We are less secure, not more secure. We are more vulnerable, not less vulnerable.

I was struck, several weeks ago, by a statement from one of our colleagues, Congressman Doug Bereuter of Nebraska. Mr. Bereuter is vice chairman of the House Intelligence Committee and a senior Republican member of the House International Relations Committee. Congressman Bereuter was a strong supporter of the House resolution authorizing the President to go to war. But in a letter to constituents, he now says the invasion of Iraq was unjustified and "it was a mistake to launch that military action." He said, "We are immersed in a dangerous, costly mess, and there is no easy and quick way to end our responsibilities in Iraq without creating bigger future problems in the region and, in general, in the Muslim world."

Mr. President, how much time do I have?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I will close by saying America is more vulnerable, not less; and we need straight answers from this administration.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority controls the next 30 minutes. Who yields time?

The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I request 14 minutes and I ask the Chair to notify me when I have reached the 12-minute mark.

Lately, we have heard a lot of politically motivated doom-and-gloom speeches, and we have heard a number of them this morning. I want to talk about a couple of issues discussed on the floor. I want to comment on our economy and I want to comment about our foreign policy.